

Swedesboro-Woolwich Board of Education

[Home](#)

< Prev

Next >

To Regulation



Search District Policies

District Policies TOC

District Policy

7510- USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Section: Property

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The Swedesboro-Woolwich School District facilities belong to the community, which paid for them for the primary purpose **of offering** a full educational program for its children. Prudent **use** and management **of** school facilities outside **of** the regular operating schedules; providing that such **use** does not interfere with the orderly conduct **of** a thorough and efficient system **of** education; allows the community to benefit more broadly from the **use of** its own property.

The Board will permit the **use of** school facilities when such permission has been requested in writing and has been approved by the Superintendent. The Board reserves the right to withdraw permission after it has been granted in the event circumstances change requiring that such school facilities or school grounds will be needed for a school district purpose or due to a school closing for weather or other emergency. In weighing competing requests for the **use of** school facilities, the Board will give priority to the following **uses**, in the descending order given:

1. **Uses** and groups directly related to the school and the operations **of** the school;
2. **Uses** and organizations indirectly related to the school;
3. Departments or agencies **of** the municipal government;
4. Other governmental agencies;
5. Community organizations formed for charitable, civic or educational purposes.

Priority status shall not be founded on any content-based nature **of** the speech at the organization's proposed meetings or functions. The Board reserves the right to negotiate and contract for long term **use** agreements; those consisting **of** repetitive **use of** school facilities for functions that occur no less than on a monthly basis. In the event the Board enters into such a long term agreement with an organization, that organization's function shall take precedence over all other organizations indirectly related to the school or unrelated to the school.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to approve and schedule the **use of** designated areas **of** a school **facility** by those community organizations or groups which have been designated by the Board and for whose activity no admission charge is made.

Fees for **Facility Use**

The Board shall approve annually a schedule of fees for the **use of** school facilities based upon the following guidelines:

1. The **use of** school facilities for activities directly related to the educational program and district operations and **use** shall be without cost to the **user** except that the **user** shall be responsible for any additional costs incurred by the **use** e.g. custodial, special equipment **use**, utility costs, and any fees charged by a law enforcement or fire department agency in connection with the **use** for the following groups:
 - a. Student groups (i.e., extra-curricular groups as defined in Board policy);
 - b. All branches of the Borough or Township including authorities within these governments; and
 - c. Nonprofit community service organizations such as boy and girl scouts, etc. A copy of the IRS determination letter under code section 501a must be provided with the application from such organizations.
2. All other organizations (including religious) or persons granted the **use of** school shall pay the scheduled fees and the cost of any additional staff services required by the **use**.
3. The Board reserves the right to grant employees **use of** district facilities according to all guidelines herein, except the costs and fees may be negotiated on a case by case basis.

General

The **use of** school facilities may be granted for the advantage of commercial or profit-making organization when the granted **use of** school facilities supports the curriculum and educational program (i.e. camp cranium) or the professional development requirements for staff. Organizations or agencies requesting permission to conduct a program directly supporting the curriculum or required staff development shall not be charged a rental fee but shall be required to pay the hourly rate for custodial staff or security officers as may be necessary for the **use of** the **facility**.

The **use of** school facilities shall not be granted for private social functions or any purpose which is prohibited by law.

In the event the Superintendent deems it advisable, any application may be submitted to the Board of Education for action.

The Superintendent or Board of Education may refuse to grant the **use of** a school building whenever in their judgment there is good reason why permission should be refused.

Smoking is prohibited at all times in any district building or on school grounds. No one may bring alcoholic beverages onto any school property. All **facility use** shall comply with State and local fire, health, safety and police regulations.

The buildings shall not be available for community **use** during holidays, vacation periods, or during the time school is not in session over the summer when the programs interfere with cleaning and maintenance schedules.

Use of school equipment in conjunction with the **use of** school facilities must be specifically requested in writing and may be granted by the procedure by which permission to **use** facilities is granted. The **user of** school equipment must accept liability for any damage to or loss **of** such equipment that occurs while it is in **use**. Where rules so specify, no item **of** equipment may be **used** except by a qualified operator.

Use of district equipment on the premises by nonschool personnel is limited to the equipment that is an integral part **of** the **facility** being **used**, i.e., the stage lights and piano in the auditorium, the basketball baskets in the gym. No district equipment shall be removed from the premises for **use** by nondistrict personnel.

The Board shall require that all **users of** school facilities comply with policies **of** this Board and the rules and regulations **of** this district. Each **user** shall present evidence **of** the purchase **of** organizational liability insurance to the limit prescribed by such rules.

The school district shall provide a copy **of** Policy and Regulation 2431.4 – Prevention and Treatment **of** Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries to all youth sports team organizations that operate on school grounds or in school facilities. In accordance with the provisions **of** N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41.5, the school district shall not be liable for the injury or death **of** a person due to the action or inaction **of** persons employed by, or under contract with, a youth sports team organization that **uses** school facilities or operates on school grounds if the youth sports team organization provides the school district **proof of** an insurance policy in the amount **of** not less than \$50,000 per person, per occurrence; insuring the youth sports team organization against liability for any bodily injury suffered by a person. The youth sports team organization must also provide a statement **of** compliance with the school district's Policy and Regulation 2431.4 - Prevention and Treatment **of** Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries.

For the purpose **of** this Policy, a “youth sports team organization” means one or more sports teams organized pursuant to a nonprofit or similar charter or which are member teams in a league organized by or affiliated with a county or municipal recreation department.

Authorization for **use of** school facilities shall not be considered as endorsement **of** or approval **of** the activity, person, group or organization nor the purposes they represent.

The Superintendent or Board **of** Education will not discriminate against or deny equal access to groups based on the religious or other content-based nature **of** the speech at their proposed meetings or functions.

Playgrounds

The Board permits the playground **of** the schools to be **used** as a recreational area by the community when school is not in session. The Board reserves the right to limit the **use of** playground equipment and the hours when the playground may be **used** when it is in the interest **of** the safety **of** district residents and the integrity **of** the school **facility**.

The rules **of** conduct, which shall govern all persons who **use** the schools' facilities, shall be published and available to the community. Students and employees **of** the district who violate these rules will be subject to discipline. Any person who violates Board policy may be requested to leave the school premises.

Because of its potential for hazard, no object that is powered by fuel or battery shall be brought onto the school grounds for any purpose that is primarily recreational without the express permission **of** the Principal. Such objects include, but are not limited to, mini-bikes, mopeds, motorized model airplanes, and rockets.

Political Activity

As **used** in this section, "school property" shall mean a building or buildings **used** for school operations.

Candidates for elective public **office**, holders **of** elected public **office** or their agent or representative are prohibited from soliciting campaign contributions on school property. No person shall make contributions, directly or indirectly, to or on behalf **of** any candidate for elective public **office**, or the candidate committee or joint candidates committee **of** any such candidate, while on school property.

This shall not apply to persons or groups reserving or renting school property for a nongovernmental purpose as a meeting location.

Any person in violation **of** this Policy may be reported to the Election Law Enforcement Commission and liable to a penalty **of** not less than \$5,000 for each violation.

N.J.S.A. 18A:20-20; 18A:20-34

Adopted: 12 September 2018

